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THE ART OF ILLUMINATION.

IV.

FOR abundance of specimens showing every variety of treatment usually employed in the latter part of the fifteenth century, few volumes are so remarkable as the copy of the "Hours of the Virgin," which formerly belonged to Isabella of Castile, the wife of Ferdinand II. of Spain. The miniatures throughout the volume, the display of heraldry, and all its various details, are so admirable, that it is evident the first artists of the time must have been employed in its production. This superb volume is written on the finest uterine vellum. It is richly illuminated throughout, and ornamented with occasional borders of various designs, chiefly of scrolls and flowers, sometimes on a gold, and sometimes on colored grounds, enclosing numerous miniatures of the finest Flemish art. Our illustration from this volume is from an exquisitely finished miniature of St. Barbara. The border to this drawing is of silver with green bands crossing it. It has evidently been copied from tapestries or hangings.

The legend of this beautiful young saint of Heliopolis is as follows: She was shut up in a very high tower by her father, Dioscorus, lest some one should marry her and deprive him of his treasure. Meditation and contemplation of the planets led her to doubt the idolatrous religion of her people, and she communicated clandestinely with Origen, the famous teacher in Alexandria, through whose aid she was baptized. Her father, who was violently opposed to the Christians, when she confessed her conversion, tried to kill her. She fled from him to the summit of the tower, and he pursued her; but angels wrapt her from his view, and carried her to a distance. Dioscorus found her and shut her up in a dungeon. All his love for her now changed to unrelenting fury and indignation, and as she would not recant, he denounced her to the pro-consul. The latter, after vainly endeavoring to persuade her to sacrifice to the false gods, ordered her to be scourged and tortured horribly; but St. Barbara only prayed for courage to endure what was inflicted for Christ's sake. Her father, seeing no hope of her yielding, carried her to a certain mountain near the city, drew his sword, and cut off her head; but as he descended the mountain, there came on a most fearful tempest, with thunder and lightning, and fire fell upon this cruel father and consumed him utterly, so that not a vestige of him remained.

The same gorgeous specimen of combined Italian and Spanish illumination which supplied the initial P used in our last article of this series furnishes us with the same letter and the text of the plate on this page. It is a volume in the British Museum. The title is enclosed within a border, the whole of which is most elaborately finished. It is formed of branches of continuous scroll work of a very peculiar character, in brown color, carefully shaded and heightened with fine lines of a delicate yellow. These scrolls enclose flow-

ers and foliage of the richest tints, and are covered at their junction with colored leaves, while the centre of each curve has a band of jewels. In the upper margin are seen two boys playing the game of quintain, and on the inner margin is a grandee, and on the outer his wife, both in dresses of the richest character. At intervals appear amorini playing musical instruments, while parrots and other birds appear on the branches. The lower margin of the border contains the arms, supporters, mottoes, and devices of Arragon, Navarre and Sicily. It has also the monogram of the unknown artist. The volume measures twelve and a half inches in height by eight inches and three-quarters in width, is beautifully written on 238 folios of the finest vellum, and is in an admirable state

they gradually superseded these more costly appliances, although examples remain to show that it still existed to a much later period.

STENCILLING IN OIL COLORS.

In stencilling, the oils should be mixed in pipkins ready for use. The colors used are the same powdered ones employed for water-color stencilling; they are mixed in oil, and thinned with turpentine, to which a certain quantity of what are called "dryers" are added. The proper quantities to add of "dryers" are troublesome at first to the beginner to understand. The safest dryer for an amateur is jappanners' gold size.

In mixing and grinding the colors together a marble slab and muller are required. These must be well cleaned with sand after every color and rinsed with turpentine; also all the brushes used for oil painting must be cleaned before they are dry, first in turpentine, and then making a lather of soap and water, rub them gently through this in the palm of the hand. If used constantly, when cleaned they may be laid in cold water, as it keeps them pliant, but they must be inclined, as if rested on their tips, brushes are invariably spoiled. A good many brushes are required for oil painting, one for each color being used.

It is better to use as many tints as possible of one color when stencilling a design in places where color is allowable. When so treated it will look full of life, instead of giving the impression of dull masses of coloring, as it would if the colors were laid on in quantities of one shade.

Thus, if green is the color selected, compound it of a little red, blue, yellow, and brown; if white mix yellow or red with it for a warm white, blue or green when coldness is required. A cold white is used in a design where much red is employed, a warm white when it is to be placed near to blue or black. Black always requires blue to be mixed with it, and sometimes lake, but it is used sparingly in all wall painting, Indian red and burnt umber taking its place whenever possible. The four

colors most used in stencilling should be indigo, Indian red, ochre, and white, and the help of brighter tints called in but rarely; these brighter tints require to be deepened and enriched so as to produce several different shades of them. To do this, additions to the original colors may be made as follows:

Light blue can be lightened with white, and deepened with indigo.

Vermilion lightened with gold or yellow, and darkened with carmine and chocolate.

Indian red lightened with vermilion and darkened with black.

Crimson should be made brilliant with vermilion, and deepened with blue or Vandyke brown.

Green lightened with yellow, deepened with blue.

En este primero Capitulo son contem-
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Primera Conclusion.

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INITIAL AND TEXT FROM THE VIANA TRANSLATION OF ARISTOTLE,
A MANUSCRIPT OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

of preservation. It contains ten large letters similar to the one reproduced here. They are all Moorish in character, some of gold, others colored; but all interlaced with the most delicate branches, from which proceed marginal borders in the purest Italian taste. Our letter is of burnished gold on the surface, the returns being of a light brown. The ground colors are green, red, and blue, according to their relative intensity. The text is further enriched with 137 small capitals, equally elaborate in design and delicate in details with the large ones.

The invention of printing, and the introduction of wood-engravings, had little effect on the art of illumination as employed in the embellishment of books, until toward the middle of the sixteenth century; after which

Indian and lemon yellows lightened with white and darkened with vermilion.

Ochre lightened with white, deepened with red.

Chocolates are composed by mixing Indian red, Vandyke brown, black, and a little vermilion.

Slate blue is made of ultramarine and black, mixed with a small quantity of vermilion and white.

Neutral tint is composed of Indian red and blue.

Browns, of Indian red and black, vermilion and black, or carmine, vermilion and black.

Orange, of vermilion and Indian yellow.

Purple, of blue and carmine, in large or small quantities, according to the shades desired.

The colors that contrast are these: Yellow and purple contrast, red and green, blue and orange, yellow orange and blue purple; blue green with red orange, yellow green with red purple. Gray can be introduced into all combinations of color, and is in perfect harmony with either blue or crimson.

Stencilling, both in water-colors and oils, is now largely employed in decorating the inside walls of all public buildings and many private houses. Most side walls being of plaster, and pretty dry, they can be prepared easily, either for water or oil stencilling, but it is necessary to remember that as the surface about to be painted is flat and composed of a solid material, being a portion of a heavy structure, it requires to be ornamented in such a manner as shall contribute to this flatness and solidity and not detract from it; therefore, no appearance of relief must be given to it, no designs that require shading employed, and whatever is painted upon it must be painted on the flat; if figures are used they must have no shade or roundness given to them, if natural flowers or forms, they must be drawn as conventional ones in pure outline, and filled in with flat color.

The choice of a color to be used for the ground wash of a wall depends upon the amount of light thrown already upon it; thus, if a passage that is to be decorated is imperfectly lighted with one window, great care must be taken to preserve and reflect every particle of light; a very delicate shade of green or a warm and soft gray should be used for the first coat of

color, and the pattern stencilled upon it should be painted in a darker shade of the same color, but not exceedingly dark, as contrast is not desirable here.

It is very difficult to judge the value and intensity of a wash of color when spread upon a large surface of wall, and that has been taken from a small pattern. The lighter tints are easier to judge than the darker ones, therefore they should be employed as much as possible by the beginner. Also the matching of tints requires attention, as no alteration in the color of a wash can be made without repainting the whole wall. All tints dry lighter than when first applied.

The choice of the color and design selected for the wall must depend upon the use to which the wall is to

be put. If the wall is to be covered with pictures, it must be subdued in tone, and must not assert itself in the least. Greens, grays, and shades of drabs, with a simple pattern stencilled round as border on the cornices and round the skirting board, in two shades of the same color, and so softly as to be hardly visible from a distance, should be used.

The stencils may be made of cardboard or thin wood—zinc, copper, and sheet-brass are preferable for small work, being much more durable, thinner, and less likely to absorb the paint or smear. The patterns are to be generally cut out with a fret saw, though different kinds can be made with scissors, files, and chisels.

First design the pattern on paper, paste it on the metal, and mark it out with the pattern-wheel. Then

will be found preferable to metal for the stencil plate, the latter being apt to "buckle" when used in large masses.

Talc powder, metallic bronzes, the waste grindings of glass cutters, when washed free from sand, may be blown or dusted on to the stencilled pattern while this is damp, and great variety and brilliancy is obtained by this method.

Stencilling is not necessarily confined to wall decoration, and many very pleasant effects may be obtained by stencilling in distemper color, or color mixed with turpentine and varnish, on coarse canvas or linen for curtains, portières, and other purposes for which woven fabrics are used.

When employing intricate designs that are composed

of an immense variety of lines, a delicate tint of color should be used, as the more various the lines the simpler the coloring, and the richer the coloring the simpler the pattern. When very rich and dark coloring is employed, the design must be of the plainest. When quaintness of design is aimed at, the colors used in the pattern stencilled over the large wash of color should be but slightly darker than it.

Similarity of tint is also much to be desired in designing, as good effects are dependent upon a judicious employment of both contrast and similarity in coloring.

When using geometrical designs, select those which are nearly square, or form a round in any direction; four inches to six inches is the best size to select for the pattern for an ordinary sitting-room. For bedrooms and boudoirs the design, when a geometrical one, should be smaller—from three inches to five inches will be found ample—as nothing tends to make a room look dwarfed, small, and low-pitched, so much as employing enormous patterns to cover its walls. When flowers, birds, or leaves are employed to decorate it, the same rule holds good, and care must be taken that the coloring of these decorations in moderate-sized rooms should in no case be brilliant or outrageous.

Geometrical and diaper designs can be either diamond-shaped, square, quatrefoil, or round, when drawn in outline; the filling-up lines will dissipate any formality of the first outline, which

will be also corrected by the coloring, as the most dismal way of decorating a wall is to cover it all over with one monotonous pattern painted in one formal color.

Much decoration can be used about ball-rooms, drawing- and dining-rooms; but the library, picture gallery, and billiard-room need only plain-colored walls, with slight borders as cornices, and the bedrooms, passages, and vestibules should be stencilled with simple flowering patterns. The vestibules, if there is sufficient light, should always have the three foot-dado, and the two plain washes of contrasting color, with borders, but no running patterns. The ceilings of sitting-rooms should be stencilled, but not those of the bedrooms. The ceilings of halls should have simple patterns.



ST. BARBARA. FROM THE "HOURS OF THE VIRGIN," A SPANISH MANUSCRIPT OF THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY.

wash away the paper, unless the pattern be a very large one, and saw out the design. Care will be required as to the bits which connect the "islands" with the continent. All of these bits will reappear in the painted work as blemishes, which must be painted out. The brushes used in stencilling are, of course, large "dabbers," and either made with a broad flat surface like the putois used by porcelain painters, or flat and wide, so as to sweep evenly over a broad surface.

If you wish to ornament a wall or ceiling cheaply, prepare your own stencils. If you cannot get metal sheets or cut them, cardboard or thin board will answer. Where the pattern is large two thin sheets of cardboard pasted together with "shoemaker's paste,"